

# *City of Alexandria, Virginia*

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## **MEMORANDUM**

DATE: DECEMBER 29, 2010

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: YON LAMBERT, PRINCIPAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNER, T&ES

SUBJECT: JANUARY 6, 2010 MEETING – FUNDING UPDATE & ACTIONS OF MAJOR TRANSPORTATION BODIES

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This memorandum provides a brief monthly update on funding and/or actions of major regional transportation bodies that relate to Alexandria.

General updates on funding-related issues of local, regional and national importance are provided below. Attachment 1 is the Commission's regular Monthly Update of Regional Transportation Board Major Actions and Funding.

### **City: FY2011 Budget and Capital Improvement Program**

At its November 24, 2009, legislative meeting City Council passed guidance resolutions for the FY 2011 City Operating Budget and the FY 2011-FY 2020 City Capital Improvement Program (CIP). This resolution provides the City Manager with a guide to what Council would like to see in the FY 2011 City proposed operating budget and CIP.

Capital Improvement Program requests are due to City Council by February 8, 2010 and the Transportation Commission will review the proposed FY2011-2020 CIP at its February 3, 2010 meeting. City Council will consider the requests and pass a budget on May 3, 2010. In between, there are numerous work sessions and public hearings. One meeting of importance for transportation projects is the CIP Budget Work Session on Wednesday, February 24, 2010 at 6:30 pm in City Hall, Sister Cities Conference Room #1101.

### **State: Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB)**

The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) on Dec. 17 adopted a Revised Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP) for Fiscal Years (FY) 2010-2015. The program includes significant changes to the slate of proposed construction and maintenance projects to address available funding sources and commonwealth priorities.

The latest shortfall for fiscal years 2010-2015 now totals \$893.5 million, including more than \$42 million in additional reductions announced in December. The \$7.6 billion revised program reflects policy and revenue changes prompting significant alterations to

the mix of projects included in the program and delayed project schedules. The CTB will begin considering the 2011-2016 SYIP next spring.

The revised program focuses on:

- Replacing and improving bridges
- Eliminating formula distribution of certain federal highway funds
- Maximizing the use of available federal funding for ongoing projects
- Completing projects already under way and those that will begin in FY 2010
- Covering increased estimates and rising project costs on projects under way

### **Regional: Transportation Planning Board**

The Transportation Planning Board (TPB) took no major actions related to funding at its December 16 meeting. In November, the TPB issued a call for projects for inclusion in the Financially Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) and the FY2011-2016 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

The deadline for transportation agencies to submit draft project input to the CLRP and TIP is March 1, 2010. At the February 3, 2010 meeting of the Transportation Commission, staff will review Alexandria's current requests and present additional information about the financial analysis which supports the CLRP.

### **Federal: Funding Updates and Grant Notices or Awards**

City staff from the offices of the City Manager, Legislative Director, T&ES and other departments continues to work with the Mayor and City Council on projects for potential funding in the reauthorization of the federal surface transportation bill. A list of potential transportation projects will be reviewed by the City Council Legislative Subcommittee on January 15 and City Council on February 8. The list includes:

1. Potomac Yard Transitway, \$3.6 million (Highest priority transportation project)
2. Eisenhower Avenue Metro Platform Extension, \$16 million (Highest priority heavy rail project)
3. Bike Parking & Bike Sharing Initiative, \$2.3 million (Highest priority project within this item is installation of bicycle parking stations at City Metrorail stops.)
4. Safe Routes to School, \$4 million (Highest priority pedestrian project.)
5. Bus Rapid Transit- Van Dorn/Beauregard, \$4 million
6. Holmes Run Greenway/Eisenhower Ave East Shared-Use Path Improvements, \$7 million
7. Potomac Yard Metro, \$25 million
8. Active Transportation Projects and Programs, \$36 million
9. Four Mile Run Pedestrian Bridge, \$7 million

There were no major developments related to the passage of a short term extension of SAFETELU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users) in December, or the passage of a long-term transportation bill.

In federal appropriations legislation that passed in December, there was an earmark for Bus Rapid Transit Rolling Stock for the planned Potomac Yard/Route 1 High Capacity

Transit Project in the amount of \$1 million to be shared equally between Alexandria and Arlington.

All transportation-related funding requests continues to follow guidance provided by the Transportation Commission and staff will provided regular updates.

### **Federal Grant Notes: FTA Announces Funding Availability for Livability Projects**

On December 1, U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood announced a Federal Transit Administration bus livability grant program and an urban circulator livability program. Applications for the new grants programs are due by February 8, 2010, and DOT anticipates making formal grant announcements by the end of March.

Funding for the new program comes from unallocated discretionary funds for the New Starts/Small Starts Bus and Bus Facility programs. DOT is using \$280 million in previously unobligated funds for the program. Approximately \$130 million will be available for the circulator program largely aimed at funding streetcar, circulator, and other local transit and mobility projects.

Grants will be limited to a maximum of \$25 million per project. According to the agency, eligible projects will promote walkable, mixed-use development and \$150 million will be available for projects that focus on linking buses and bus facilities and improving job access or neighborhood redevelopment. Key evaluation criteria include the promotion of livability and sustainability, and addressing the six livability principles previously outlined by the interagency partnership.

The City is currently investigating its options for both programs. The bus livability program must be applied for by designated recipients of Section 5307, which means WMATA. A potential application may include proposed bus stop improvements such as new bus stop signs and real time bus information.

Attachment 1: Monthly Update of Regional Transportation Board Major Actions and Funding